

REMARKS

In an Official Action dated January 3, 2005, the Examiner indicated that the status identifiers are not correct for the claims filed in the Applicants' Response filed on October 7, 2004. Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider her decision in light of the following discussion.

The following is a time line of the pending claims.

The application was originally filed with 19 claims.

On January 27, 2004, in a Response to an election requirement Applicants elected the species in Figs. 7-11, which read on all 19 claims. No amendments were made to the claims in the Response.

On August 5, 2004, Applicants filed a Response to a substantive Official Action. In the Response, the claims were amended as follows:

Claims 2, 10 and 13 were canceled.

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 12 were amended.

Claims 20-32 were new claims.

Claims 3, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 14-19 from the original application were not amended.

On October 7, 2004 Applicants filed a Response to a Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment because the status identifier was not included for a few of the newly added claims and a few of the claim identifiers were different from the identifiers in the new rules. In Applicants' Response the claim identifiers were corrected to comply with the new regulations. No other changes to the claims were made. Accordingly, the status of the claims is the same as identified above.

The claims in the October 7, 2004 Response were identified as follows:

Claims 2, 10 and 13 were identified as "canceled".

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 12 were marked with the identifier (Currently Amended).

Claims 20-32 were marked with the identifier (New).

Claims 3, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 14-19 were marked with the identifier (Original).

As can be seen, the claim identifiers match the status of the claims and each of the claim indicators matches the identifiers listed in new Rule 37 C.F.R. 1.121.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider the decision that the claim status identifiers are not correct.

Additionally, the Official Action does not indicate which status indicators are incorrect, and as discussed above, Applicants believe that the identifiers are correct. However, Applicants' undersigned attorney notes that the status identifier for canceled claims 2, 10 and 13 is not in parentheses. If this is the basis for the Examiner's objection, Applicants have changed the status identifiers for claims 2, 10 and 13 to include the parentheses.

In light of the foregoing, Applicants request that the Examiner consider the current claim amendments and the remarks previously presented in the Response submitted on August 8, 2004. If the Examiner believes there are still deficiencies in the claim status identifiers, Applicants request that the Examiner inform Applicants of the claim identifiers that the Examiner contends are incorrect so that Applicants can more clearly assess the issue.